



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Nov. 1, 2013

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Riverside Reconnects, Siemens and San Diego MTS to Bring Streetcar to Riverside

Nov. 7 event to give Riverside residents “on board” look and feel of innovative transportation option

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Riverside residents intrigued by the possibility of streetcars coming back to the city will be able to tour one in downtown Riverside on Thursday (Nov. 7) through a cooperative arrangement with its manufacturer, Siemens, and the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS).

The 80-foot, bright red state-of-the-art vehicle manufactured in Sacramento will stop in Riverside en route to San Diego and rest on a temporary rail system that will be assembled on the south side of University Avenue between Main and Orange streets.

The streetcar will be open to the public from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The free event coordinated by the city’s Riverside Reconnects program coincides with the monthly “Riverside Arts Walk” event that typically brings several thousand people to downtown Riverside.

“This is a huge opportunity for Riverside residents to get an ‘up close’ view of the kind of transportation that is transforming mobility in cities around the country,” said Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey, who has championed the streetcar idea in his first year in office.

“We are very grateful to the generous folks at Siemens and the MTS in San Diego for their willingness to take a day out of their transportation schedule to showcase their technology here in Riverside.”

The streetcar will arrive by truck in the early morning hours and be unloaded and prepped for viewing prior to 9 a.m. It will be loaded back onto a truck at about 8 p.m. before continuing on to San Diego, where it will be put into full service. The public will be able to walk through and see what the interior of a streetcar looks and feels like. The event, however, will not be held if it is raining.

The vehicle is a Siemens S70 model, which is one of the new generation of vehicles that can perform as either a streetcar or a light rail vehicle and change with today’s evolving city needs.

“Siemens is pleased to be able to provide this opportunity for the citizens of Riverside,” said Robin Stimson, a spokesperson for Siemens Infrastructure & Cities Rail Systems Division. “We are seeing

streetcars like this not only increasing mobility in cities around the world, but also creating increased investment and economic opportunity in the process.”

Streetcars once rolled through Riverside as part of a regional network that connected Southern California. Riverside Reconnects is a movement to bring streetcars back to Riverside as a way of promoting economic development and increased investment.

A year-long feasibility study will determine if a streetcar network can link downtown Riverside with UC Riverside along University Avenue and connect downtown Riverside with much of the rest of the city along Magnolia Avenue. About 200,000 people live, work or attend school near such a proposed network, according to city estimates.

The City Council voted Oct. 8 to accept a \$237,500 state grant to cover much of the study’s cost and to provide \$62,500 in required matching funds. The study will examine costs and ways to pay for such a system, as well as how a system could affect property values and attract investment to areas along the proposed routes.

“Riverside Reconnects has the potential to dramatically change our landscape while spurring increased economic development,” Mayor Bailey said. “Such a streetcar system also would help us attract the emerging workforce of young professionals who are embracing a lifestyle that does not necessarily include a car. These next-generation workers are looking for places that fit their needs, and Riverside can be just such a place.”